

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A polypeptide having the cinnamyl alcohol dehydrogenase function, selected from a group comprising (a), (b) and (c) polypeptide:
 - 5 (a) polypeptide containing all portion of the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO. 2;
 - (b) polypeptide containing a substantial portion of the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO. 2;
 - (c) polypeptide substantially similar to the above (a) or (b) polypeptide,
- 10 wherein the cinnamyl alcohol dehydrogenase has substrate specificity for coniferyl alcohol, a substrate of backward reaction as well as coniferaldehyde, a substrate of forward reaction, and has higher substrate affinity for coniferaldehyde than coniferyl alcohol.
- 15 2. A polynucleotide encoding the polypeptide of claim 1.
3. A method for inhibiting a plant growth, which comprises a step of inhibiting the expression or function of a polypeptide that has the cinnamyl alcohol dehydrogenase function and consists of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO. 2 or its equivalent
20 sequence.
4. The method according to claim 3, in which the step is performed by introducing an anti-sense nucleotide against the polynucleotide set forth in claim 2 into a plant.
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5. The method according to claim 3, in which the step is performed by introducing a recombinant vector containing an anti-sense nucleotide against the polynucleotide set forth in claim 2 into a plant.
- 30 6. The method according to claim 3, in which the step is performed by

introducing a *Agrobacterium tumefaciens* transformant transformed with a recombinant vector containing an anti-sense nucleotide against the polynucleotide set forth in claim 2, into a plant.

- 5 7. The method according to claim 3, in which the step is performed by any one technique that is selected among gene deletion, gene insertion, T-DNA insertion, homologous recombination, transposon tagging, small interfering RNA (siRNA) and the like.
- 10 8. A process for screening a growth inhibitor of plants, which comprises a step for screening a substance inhibiting the expression or function of a polypeptide that has the cinnamyl alcohol dehydrogenase function and consists of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO. 2 or its equivalent sequence.
- 15 9. A composition for inhibiting plant growth comprising a growth inhibitor screened by the process set forth in claim 8.
10. The composition according to claim 9, in which the inhibitor is selected from a group consisting of (1) the anti-sense nucleotide against the polynucleotide of claim 2;
- 20 (2) the recombinant vector containing the anti-sense nucleotide against the polynucleotide of claim 2; and (3) the transformant of *Agrobacterium tumefaciens* transformed with the recombinant vector containing the anti-sense nucleotide against the polynucleotide of claim 2.